

REMARKS

The Office examined claims 1-7 and rejected claims 1-7. With this paper, claims 1, 2 and 5-7 are amended, and new claims 8-13 are added to the application. Thus, the application now includes claims 1-13.

Changes to the claims

Independent method claims 1 and 5 are changed to eliminate the recitation of making available a "means" by which the third party is able to determine when to stop timing access, since the invention as claimed there without such a recitation is believed distinguished over the prior art of record. Method claims 6 and 7, depending from claim 5, are amended to more distinctly claim at least two ways in which the third party can determine when to stop timing access. New method claims 8 and 9, depending from claim 1, are provided so as to correspond to claims 6 and 7 (depending from claim 5). New system claims 10-12 are provided to correspond to various aspects of the previously submitted method claims. New independent method claim 13 is provided to even more distinctly claim the invention in respect to the use of a link for signalling the start of a session (and so the start of timing access to information).

Further--based on the disclosure at e.g. page 3, line 25, and also page 3, line 31 to page 4, line 2, and also page --all of the claims now make express that the "links" recited in the claims for first redirecting the consumer (equipment) from the vendor to the third party (server) and then from the third party to the location (on a server connected to the network) where the information resides are links on respective pages for presentation to the consumer by a browser hosted by equipment operated by the consumer.

Claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

In paragraph 3 of the Office action claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being unpatentable over Dedrick (U.S. Pat. No. 6,016,509).

As noted above, all claims now expressly recite that the "links" providing redirection of the consumer (equipment) from the vendor to the third party and then from the third party to the information recited in the claims are links on respective pages for presentation to the consumer by a browser hosted by equipment operated by the consumer. Applicant's attorney had previously made express for the record that the term "link" is used in the application as a term of art, indicating a reference to another document or to a program (software application) in a hypertext system, such as the World Wide Web, and has the property that when a user of a browser having an interface providing a link, clicks on (or exercises) the link, the browser is said to take the user to the web page/ document/ program, i.e. it provides a referred to document to the user or executes a program referred to by the link. Thus, in the first recited step, when the user exercises (clicks on) the link (called the pricetag link in the application) connecting the consumer to the third party, the browser/ computer software interface being used by the consumer, causes a web page to be presented to the consumer indicating that the consumer is connected to the third party, i.e. the that the browser of the consumer is accessing a web page (called the pricetag page) hosted by a server operated by the third party.

Dedrick never once discloses the exercise of a link--called a start session link in the application and in some of the claims--provided by a third party, for redirecting/ linking/ connecting via a computer network the consumer (equipment) to a

location where information made available by a vendor resides. The exercise of such a link, or a vendor server providing such a link is recited in all of the claims of the application. Further, Dedrick never once even discloses a step in which, or a vendor server having means by which, a vendor (server) provides to a consumer (equipment) a link--called a pricetag link in the application and in some of the claims--to a third-party (server), which is necessary in the invention in order for the third party to time access to the information, and is also claimed in all of the claims of the application. Dedrick discloses a consumer connecting to a metering server (which, if it analogous to any of the entities of the application, would most likely be analogized to the third-party server, since it is the metering server that times access to information) to access information made available by a publisher via a clearinghouse server. In what is disclosed by Dedrick, there is never a connection by a consumer first to the publisher or the clearinghouse server--the entity making information available over a computer network and so analogous to what is termed the "vendor" in the application and in the claims--and then, via a redirection as a result of the exercise by the consumer of a link (so as to cause "redirection," as set out in the application at page 4, line 15) to the metering server. Thus, Dedrick fails to disclose either a redirection of a consumer--via exercise of a first link on a (web) page--from the vendor/clearinghouse server/ publisher to the metering server/ third-party, and then, via exercise of a second link, from the metering server/ third-party to the information made available by the vendor.

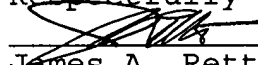
Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102 of claims 1-7 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Conclusion

For all the foregoing reasons it is believed that claims 1-13 are in condition for allowance and their passage to issue is earnestly solicited. Applicant's attorney urges the Examiner to call to discuss the present response if anything in the present response is unclear or unpersuasive.

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Respectfully submitted,

  
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